



Spotlight

50-YEAR WAIT

KG BARU

KG BARU FOLK ANXIOUS ABOUT OFFER AFTER CHANGE IN GOVT

They have yet to receive an answer from the new govt on the status of the redevelopment plan

For them, watching the collapse of the Pakatan Harapan federal government, resignation of Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad as prime minister and the swearing-in of Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin was like a waking dream.

Some clutched their hearts as they recited Quranic verses, praying for courage and serenity to face uncertain days ahead.

Kampung Baru Development Corp (KBDC) chief executive officer Datuk Zulkurnain Hassan says he receives 15 phone calls, text messages and visits a day from worried landowners since the beginning of the political impasse.

He says calls from landowners have jammed the corporation's phones line and many of them have streamed into the office to ask "jadi tak?" (will it still happen?) as they want to know whether the redevelopment project would continue.

Landowner Shahrom Mohd Harun, 74, urged the prime minister to issue a statement on Kampung Baru soon to quell their fears and cease the intrigue.

"Everybody is stressed. We want to know what's happening now. "Someone with authority should



Kampung Baru in Kuala Lumpur. The government is urged to update landowners on the type of groundwork that will be done on the massive redevelopment project involving 80ha in the enclave. FILE PIX

VEENA BABULAL AND FARAH SOLHI
KUALA LUMPUR
news@nst.com.my



Datuk Zulkurnain Hassan

AFTER 50 years of waiting to cash in on their land, Kampung Baru folk believed it was finally becoming a reality when the then government made an announcement five months ago.

The then government had made not one but two offers for their land, riddled with caveats and small estate ownership disputes.

The latest bid in October was increased from the offer of RM850 per square foot (psf) to RM1,000.

Everything was going smoothly until the "Sheraton Move".

Since then, about 60 per cent of the 5,359 registered landowners who agreed to the offer have been having sleepless nights.

announce what the government is going to do. They (the authorities) have been silent for the past two to three weeks," said Shahrom, a committee member of the Association of Owners and Beneficiaries of Kampung Baru Land.

He says it is imperative for the government to update landowners on the type of groundwork that will be done on the massive redevelopment project involving a 80ha plot of land in the enclave.

Almost 80 per cent of land in this earmarked area is privately-owned.

Shahrom says former federal territories minister Khalid Abdul Samad had set June as the deadline for the ministry to gain a referendum from landowners to decide whether the project will be retained or dropped.

The ministry had targeted for sale and purchase agreements to be inked by September.

Shahrom says everything is up in the air now.

He reminds the government that most landowners in Kam-

pung Baru are "old people" descended from Kuala Lumpur's pioneers and they should not be treated this way.

"These people are second- to fourth-generation Kampung Baru settlers. (The government) got them all excited about redevelopment, but then (the government) is being quiet. Does it even care about what happens next?"

He says promises made by the government should be kept and urges for redevelopment plans to proceed.

He says the government should make a final decision on Kampung Baru's redevelopment based on the needs of the people and the decision should not be influenced by politics.

"Landowners have been informed about this redevelopment plan even before the 14th General Election in 2018. We were asked to hold on to our land by ministers and other government agencies. They said our land would only increase in value."

Shahrom says when PH took

over the federal government and decided to accelerate the Kampung Baru redevelopment plan, the then opposition claimed it could do a better job.

"Now it's time to make good on those promises," he says, while reminding the government not to turn its back on Kampung Baru.

He says most landowners would understand if the plan needed to "tweaked" or scaled down due to the challenging economic situation.

But Shahrom did not mince his words when he described the rights of Kampung Baru folk and how much they know about what is going on.

"It works both ways. If (the government) says no (to redevelopment), then we can also say no to them. We won't take it lying down. We are not getting any younger. Things have changed and technology has allowed people to speak up every day through WhatsApp and videos. We know what's going on.

"They can't hide. They can do the talking, but we know how to act."

Association of Owners and Beneficiaries of Kampung Baru Land president Mashuti Mat Soom urges its members to keep



Mashuti Mat Soom

PRAYER TIMES

	SUBUH	SYURUK	ZUHUR	ASAR	MAGRIB	ISTAK
Melaka	6:12	7:20	1:24	4:35	7:26	8:35
Penang	6:20	7:26	1:32	4:45	7:32	8:41
K. Lumpur	6:15	7:21	1:27	4:39	7:28	8:37
Johor Baru	6:05	7:13	1:18	4:28	7:20	8:29
Kuantan	6:09	7:17	1:21	4:33	7:22	8:31
Ipo	6:17	7:22	1:29	4:42	7:30	8:39